

ATTACHMENT A



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THE FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE FISCAL YEAR 2009 REQUEST FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW AND TRAINING GRANTS – METHOD I, ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS

States are required to use this solicitation to apply for the Administrative Reviews and Training Grants - Method I: Administrative Reviews Grants.

APPLICATION DUE DATE: MARCH 19, 2009

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**Attachment A – Request for Administrative Review and Training Grants – Method I,
Administrative Reviews**

**Attachment B – Additional Administrative Reviews Application Template for Method I
Form SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance with Instructions**

Form SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs with Instructions

Form SF-424B, Assurances - Non Construction Programs with Instructions

Certification/Disclosure Requirements Related to Lobbying with Instructions

**NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM (NSLP)
FY 2009 ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW AND TRAINING GRANTS REQUEST
ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW GRANT AWARDS**

INTRODUCTION

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-265) amended Section 22 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA), to establish a requirement that State agencies (SAs) conduct additional administrative reviews of selected school food authorities (SFAs). It also amended Section 7 of the Child Nutrition Act to provide funding for States to be used for administrative reviews and training of SFAs. Both of these requirements are focused on SFAs which have demonstrated a high level of, or a high risk for, administrative error.

To assist SAs in achieving these requirements, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has approximately \$16 million available in fiscal year (FY) 2009 to fund Administrative Review and Training Grants (ART). The grant funds will be available only to the 57 SAs that administer the Child Nutrition Programs for the purpose of identifying, reviewing, and training local educational agencies that have demonstrated a high level of, or a high risk for, administrative error. FNS will make the funds available on a competitive but streamlined basis.

The FY 2009 ART grant award process involves two types of grant awards:

Method I, Administrative Reviews: funding specifically to conduct additional administrative reviews required under Section 22 of the NSLA; and

Method II, Training and Oversight: funding for special projects via a Concept Paper.

SAs may apply for either or both methods. If applying for both, separate applications must be submitted for each.

This Request for Application (RFA) is for Method I grants only. Applications for these grants must be received no later than March 19, 2009. The application includes the attached template (Attachment B) as well as the attached SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, SF-424(A) Budget Summary, and SF-424(B), Assurances.

This method seeks applications for funding to conduct additional administrative reviews of SFAs that have had, or are likely to experience, administrative errors. The requirement for additional administrative reviews of such SFAs is described in the program memorandum coded SP 28-2008 which can be found on the Agency's Partnerweb. An additional administrative review in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) includes a review of applications, certification, verification, and/or meal counting, and meal claiming procedures. These areas are covered by the Coordinated

Review Effort (CRE) Performance Standard (PS1) and the verification component of the general areas of review. The CRE procedures for these areas, as specified in 7 CFR 210.18, should be used to conduct the additional review(s) unless alternate procedures are approved by FNS. If an additional administrative review results in significant findings, the SA must conduct a follow-up review to confirm that all required corrective actions have been taken.

The actual number of awards will depend on the availability of funds.

DATES

Applications must be received **on or before 5:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, March 19, 2009**. Applications received after this date and time will not be considered for funding.

Background

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-265) amended Section 22 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, and Section 7 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to establish a requirement that SAs conduct additional administrative reviews of selected local education agencies, and training of selected local education agencies.

To support SAs in meeting these statutory requirements, FNS makes available ART Grants to reduce administrative errors and to conduct additional administrative reviews. For FY 2009, FNS has approximately \$16 million available to fund these ART grants. FNS is requesting applications for these ART Grants under two funding methods: Method I awards are specifically for the purpose of conducting additional administrative reviews; and Method II awards are provided to SAs for special ART projects proposed via a concept paper. SAs may submit a request for funds under either or both funding methods; however, there is a separate application process and grant agreement that applies to each grant award method, respectively. This RFA is solely for grants to be awarded and administered under Method I.

Purpose

The purpose of these grants is to encourage and support SAs in their efforts to decrease administrative errors and to conduct additional administrative reviews of those SFAS that may have a high level of, or a high risk for, administrative error. SAs interested in obtaining funding under Method I should review this RFA (Attachment A) and complete the attached template (Attachment B) which contains a series of questions. The attached SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, SF-424(A), Budget Summary, and SF-424(B), Assurances must also be completed. Funding may be requested up to \$3500 per SFA for administrative review. All allocated costs, including indirect costs, must be actual and documented. Applicants may apply for this funding directly through the

grants.gov website at www.grants.gov or via mail to Debby Shore, Grant Officer, Grants Management Division, Food and Nutrition Service, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 738, Alexandria, Virginia 22302 by no later than 5 p.m. on March 19, 2009.

Authority

Public Law 108-265 authorizes funding for Administrative Review and Training Fund Grants. To be eligible, SAs must identify SFAs or schools that are experiencing or are likely to experience administrative errors.

I. Who May Apply?

Eligible applicants include all SAs that administer the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). In this instance, the term SA means (a) the State educational agency and, (b) any other agency of the State which has been designated by the Governor or other appropriate executive or legislative authority of the State and approved by the Department of Agriculture to administer the Program in schools. In instances where there are two agencies within a State, such as in the case where the public and private agencies are different, separate applications are acceptable. However, in all instances, in order to be considered, an application should be submitted by the SA(s) in response to this solicitation.

II. Available Grant Funds and Deadlines

A total of approximately \$16 million is available for Administrative Review and Training Fund Grants in FY 2009. Available funds will be awarded to SAs in the form of grants; however, the submission of a request for funds does not guarantee funding.

Funding may be requested up to \$3500 per review. All allocated costs, including indirect costs, must be actual and documented. SAs may request funding for reviews to be completed by September 30, 2010. The funds may cover activity for the remainder of the school year 2008-2009 and activity for school year 2009-2010.

All grant funds must be obligated and all program activities under the grant (other than activities relating to the close out of the grant) must be completed by September 30, 2010. The close out of the grant must occur 90 days later, by December 31, 2010, and all obligations incurred under the grant must be liquidated by this date. Any funds that are not liquidated by December 31, 2010 must be returned to FNS. The final reports are due to FNS no later than December 31, 2010. Please see Section VI below for additional reporting requirements.

III. What to include in the Application

Applications must include a completed template (Attachment B), a SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance including a Data Universal Number (DUNS) (a DUNS number can be obtained from the Dun and Bradstreet Group), a Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (CFDA number 10.579), an application cover page identifying the title of the grant award being sought, a Standard Form 424(A) Budget Summary, and all required assurances. If indirect costs will be claimed, a current approved indirect cost rate agreement must also be submitted. Note: The Standard Form 424(A) budget summary need only provide the total amount of grant funds requested and does not need to specify projected costs by line item.

IV. How to Submit an Application for Funding

1. Mail: Applicants may receive the RFA package by downloading the application from the FNS website, by downloading the application from the www.grants.gov website or by contacting FNS and requesting a hard copy be sent by mail.

Applications submitted via mail should be addressed to Debby Shore, Grant Officer, Grants Management Division, Food and Nutrition Service, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 738, Alexandria, Virginia 22302 no later than 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on March 19, 2009. Applications must be received by close of business (**5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time) on March 19, 2009**. Applications received after this date and time or submitted via facsimile or e-mail will not be considered for funding.

2. Electronic Submission through Grants.gov: Applicants may access and apply electronically through www.grants.gov. To submit the application electronically via the www.grants.gov website, there are a number of steps in the registration process that will be required before the application may be submitted. It is very important that users of the grants.gov system familiarize themselves with the requirements for system use. Please be aware that in order to use the grants.gov system, users will need to register online and obtain both a Data Universal Number (DUNS) and a Contract Registry Number. Applicants that apply through www.grants.gov will receive a confirmation notice that the application has been accepted by the system. Applicants must then send an email to notify the FNS Grant Officer that the proposal has been submitted through the www.grants.gov portal and that you have received a confirmation notice from www.grants.gov that the application has been accepted by the system.

The application must be successfully submitted to www.grants.gov and the FNS Grant Officer must receive notification of electronic submission no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on March 19, 2009. **When using the grants.gov portal to apply, we**

strongly recommend that you submit the online application at least two weeks before the application deadline in case there are problems with the website.

All questions regarding the application and electronic submission notification should be referred to the FNS Grant Officer, Debby Shore via email at deborah.shore@fns.usda.gov or by telephone at (703) 305-2184.

V. Evaluation Information

All applications that meet the deadline for submission will be screened for completeness and conformity to the requirements of this solicitation. FNS anticipates funding all complete and responsive applications.

Applications that do not meet this initial screen **will not be evaluated further.**

VI. Administrative Requirements

Administrative Requirements:

The grant program will be awarded and administered in accordance with applicable Federal and program regulations. These include but are not limited to:

7 CFR Part 3015: Uniform Federal Assistance Requirements implementing OMB directives (OMB Circular A-87, Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments);

7 CFR Part 3016: Uniform Federal Assistance Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments;

7 CFR Part 3017: Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement);

7 CFR Part 3021: Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance);

7 CFR Part 3018: Restrictions on Lobbying; and

7 CFR Part 3052: (OMB Circular A-133) Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations.

Funding:

- Funds authorized cannot be used for reviews that are currently carried out using State Administrative Expense (SAE) funds.

- Funds cannot be used for local-level expenses associated with administrative reviews or training activities.
- Funds must be expended in accordance with activities outlined in the template.
- Funding for approved proposals will be provided through the Letter of Credit process in the same manner as other funds. However, SAs will be required to separately track and report these funds via a SF-269(A) Financial Status Report.

Assurances:

- FNS will obtain assurance that applicants are neither suspended nor debarred prior to making an award. If chosen, the applicant must also agree to make a good faith effort, on a continuing basis, to (A) maintain a drug-free workplace (including taking specific actions described at 7 CFR Sec. 3021.200 through 3021.230); and (B) identify all workplace locations where work under Federal award will be performed (7 CFR Sec. 3021.200). Since Federal entities will no longer collect a paper certification, this may include the following:
 - a) Notifying all sub-grantees and contractors of the Drug Free Workplace rules,
 - b) Making conforming changes to your internal procedures, directives, training materials, etc., and
 - c) Incorporating the new rules into your sub-grantee monitoring practices.
- Applicants chosen for award will also be required to ensure that all sub-contractors and sub-grantees are neither excluded nor disqualified under the suspensions and debarment rules found at 7 CFR Sec. 3017.300 by doing any **one** of the following:
 - a) Checking the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) found at www.epls.gov
 - b) Collecting a certification that the entity is neither excluded nor disqualified. Since a Federal certification form is no longer available, the grantee or sub-grantee electing this method must devise its own; and
 Including a clause to this effect in the sub-grant agreement and in any procurement contract expected to equal or exceed \$25,000 awarded by the grantee or a sub-grantee under its grant or sub-grant.

Reporting:

- All SAs receiving FY 2009 Administrative Review and Training Fund Grants are required to submit the following reports in accordance with the deadlines noted:
 - a) Semiannual Financial Reports. FNS is transitioning to electronic submission of SF-269 financial data. At some point during fiscal year 2009, FNS will no longer accept paper SF-269A submissions from the grantee. Grantees will be required to electronically enter the semiannual as well as the final financial

status report (SF-269A) into the Food Programs Reporting System (FPRS). This report must be certified by the grantee's chief fiscal officer or an officer of comparable rank. If you are selected for a grant, we will provide further instructions on electronically entering your data into FPRS. Further instruction regarding the reporting format and dates will be provided to those receiving awards.

- b) **Semiannual Progress Reports.** The Semiannual Progress Reports must include **(in narrative form)**: 1) a brief description of the planned review activities for the report period; 2) accomplishments for each activity and completion dates; 3) a description of any deviations from the approved plan—this summary should discuss difficulties encountered and solutions developed; and 4) any other unique aspects that would be useful to share including the number and names of local educational agencies that were reviewed using the grant funds. **An original and one copy** of the Progress Report must be submitted semiannually. Completion dates will be provided to those receiving awards.

VII. Checklist for the Application Package

The application package must include:

_____The Application for Funding

- Template (Attachment B);
- Standard Form 424, Application for Federal Assistance;
- Standard Form 424(A), Budget Information – Non Construction Programs;
- Standard Form 424(B), Assurances – Non Construction Programs;
- Anti-Lobbying Restrictions require that an applicant submit the required certification with each new submission of an application for funding.
- The Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

_____The Correct Number of Copies

- An original bearing the original signature of the authorized representative.
- Two copies of the original application.

_____The Correct Format

- The original must be ready for copying, i.e., single-sided, unstapled, unbound, single spaced and on 8 ½ by 11 white paper;
- Font size must be 12 point;
- Margins must be at least one inch;
- Original and copies must be on white paper;

The application and attachments cannot include videotapes, brochures, binders, folders, or sleeves.